in 2002 for transfer of technology for setting up a 2.40 crores/per year plastic cards unit under 100 per cent buy-back arrangement for five years;

(b) whether the BEL has so far invested more than Rs. 4.5 crores in this project;

(c) what is the share of the French company towards capital of the project; and

(d) the present status of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. Bharat Electronics Ltd. (BEL) has invested approximately Rs. 3.76 crores by way of procurement of capital equipment, raw-material, consumables and spares in this project.

(c) The share of the French company in this project by way of supply of equipment is USD 742,500 as per the agreement.

(d) Implementation for the project is delayed due to material default by the french company M/s Unival. BEL has invoked the Arbitration clause in the agreement for material breach of the agreement by M/s Unival.

Self-sufficiency by Indian Armed Forces

994. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the occasion of celebration of Taknik Diwas by Defence Research and Development Organisation Prime Minister is reported to have stated that the Indian Armed Forces will have to attain self-sufficiency;

(b) what is the current status of the Indian Armed Forces *vis-a-vis* self-sufficiency; and

(c) whether the goal can be achieved in a time-frame?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. Prime Minister stated that self-reliant military is essential for our strategic autonomy.

(b) Government has the policy of progressively enhancing indigenous content of weapon systems in the Armed Forces. We are self reliant in several areas of military technology *i.e.* arms and ammunition, combat and armoured vehicles, guided missiles, aircraft, communication, radars and sonar systems.

(c) Self-sufficiency is dictated by threat perception in a region which is a continuously changing phenomenon. India is moving steadily in the direction of achieving the goal of self-sufficiency.

Short Service Commission in the Navy to Commercial Licence Holders

†995. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to award Short Service Commission in the Navy to the commercial licence holders for the sailing of ships;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of commissioned officers likely to be awarded commission?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Commercial licence holders of ships are eligible to apply for Short Service Commission in the Navy if they fulfil the age and educational criteria prescribed for recruitment in the Navy. There are no earmarked vacancies. Those persons who qualify in the Services Selection Board and come in the merit, are granted Short Service Commission.

Terrorists killed by Army in J&K

996. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of terrorists are waiting to cross over to India from across the border;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.